

2007

The Struggle for the South Carolina Backcountry, 1775-1776

Pierson J. Bell

College of William & Mary - Arts & Sciences

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.wm.edu/etd>



Part of the [United States History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Bell, Pierson J., "The Struggle for the South Carolina Backcountry, 1775-1776" (2007). *Dissertations, Theses, and Masters Projects*. Paper 1539626534.

<https://dx.doi.org/doi:10.21220/s2-cn1c-j927>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses, Dissertations, & Master Projects at W&M ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations, Theses, and Masters Projects by an authorized administrator of W&M ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@wm.edu.

The Struggle for the South Carolina Backcountry, 1775-1776

Pierson J. Bell

Buffalo, New York

Bachelor of Arts, Canisius College, 2006

A Thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty
of the College of William and Mary in Candidacy for the Degree of
Master of Arts

Department of History

The College of William and Mary
August 2007

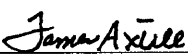
APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

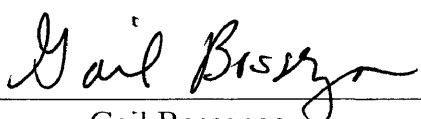
Master of Arts


Pierson J. Bell

Approved by the Committee, July 2007


James Axtell, Chair


James Allegro


Gail Bossenga

ABSTRACT

In 1775, the South Carolina Council of Safety and Provincial Congress faced the tall order of convincing backcountry settlers to join them in overthrowing royal government. Throughout the backcountry, enthusiasm for independence ran low. The lack of revolutionary zeal was a consequence of political, economic, and social differences between the backcountry and the lowcountry. Political power was concentrated in Charleston and the lowcountry. The backcountry lacked representation in the colonial Assembly, courts to prosecute criminals, and the Anglican establishment necessary to establishing a deferential social order. Economically, backcountry farmers were unable to replicate the rice plantations of the lowcountry. Without profits from a staple-crop such as rice, an egalitarian social order developed in the backcountry. Certain historians have argued that the influence of prominent individuals within the backcountry, who shared economic interests with coastal planters, helped to rally the backcountry to independence. Without strong political institutions and a staple-crop economy, deference failed to take root, undermining the arguments of these historians.

In light of the differences between the two regions, revolutionary allegiances were not forged on a common ideology. How then did the Whig government secure the backcountry? The answer is two-fold and centers on the issue of protection. While the Whigs faced open opposition from back-settlers, the backcountry was subdued through threats of violence. The Council of Safety and Provincial Congress used militia forces to suppress political dissent in addition to waging economic warfare against those opposed to the independence movement. Rather than take up arms as active loyalists, most individuals chose to preserve their property by acquiescing to Whig rule. Whig forces also benefited from a major strategic blunder on the part of the British. Fear of Indian attacks ran high in the backcountry, and though the British had no intention of using the Indians to attack the colony, their actions sparked suspicion. While British intentions remained unclear to back-settlers, Whig forces sacked the Cherokees in 1776, securing the allegiance of thousands of back-settlers in the process. In 1780, thousands of back-settlers took up arms under the guard of British troops, reinforcing the notion that allegiance was based on protection and not political ideology.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Dedication	ii
Acknowledgments	iii
Introduction	1
Chapter I. Life in the Backcountry	7
Chapter II. Intimidation	22
Chapter III. The Indian Threat	38
Conclusion	48
Bibliography	60
Vita	64

DEDICATION

To Mom and Dad, without whom I would have never made it to William & Mary.

To Aimee, whose unwavering faith in my abilities helped me overcome the many inferiority complexes I developed while a graduate student.

To Dr. Jonathan Mercantini, formerly of Canisius College, who sparked my interest in revolutionary South Carolina.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks goes out to Professor James Axtell for serving as my thesis advisor and Professors James Allegro and Gail Bossenga for agreeing to serve on my committee. The first chapter of this thesis is an evolution of a paper I completed for Professor Allegro's readings course in early America, and I am especially grateful to him for his comments and criticisms. I would also like to thank all three professors for taking time away from their own research to read drafts of this thesis over the summer.

INTRODUCTION

When Thomas Brown regained full consciousness on the evening of August 2, 1775, he probably awoke with a splitting headache. A strong blow from a rifle to the back of his skull had left Brown semiconscious. Just hours before he had been confronting a hostile mob from the porch of a plantation house deep within the Georgia backcountry. The headaches Brown would suffer for the rest of his life were not the only permanent wound he carried with him as a result of the confrontation. Brown's feet had sustained severe trauma from exposure to a fire, crippling two toes and forcing him to walk with a limp for several months. Had his hand reached up to touch his head, he would have found a raw, open wound. If the blow to his head had clouded Brown's memory, he may have assumed that Creek Indians had claimed his scalp; but his legs revealed the true identity of his assailants. A thick layer of tar caked his lower extremities, the signature punishment for those who opposed the will of the revolutionary mob.¹

In the aftermath of the attack, Brown fled Georgia for the Ninety-Six district of the South Carolina backcountry to join forces with prominent loyalists. The angry mob that appeared at his door demanded that he sign an association swearing allegiance to the

¹ Edward J. Cashin, *The King's Ranger: Thomas Brown and the American Revolution on the Southern Frontier* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1989), 27-29. Though Brown settled in Georgia, he became a staunch loyalist and traveled extensively throughout South Carolina seeking to rally back-settlers for the Crown. His experience is similar to those who opposed Whig rule in South Carolina and thus is used as an example here.

Whig government. Brown had arrived in the colony less than a year before the attack, but he immediately entered a polarized society. As a new immigrant, he lacked the hatred of British policies that had been brewing for ten years among many colonists. Yet the angry mob that appeared at his door did not seek conciliatory gestures or afford him the option of neutrality. He was either with them or against them.

Brown's mistreatment at the hands of the Whigs spurred him to become a prominent loyalist leader, the commander of a provincial regiment known as the King's Rangers, and Indian Superintendent for the Southern Department late in the war. Though the abuse Brown received at the hands of the Whigs was uncommon for most backcountry settlers, each backcountry resident was confronted with a choice: patriot or loyalist, associator or non-associator; there was no in-between. In the political and social turbulence of 1775, a year that witnessed the fall of royal government and open conflict between neighbors throughout South Carolina, the decisions made by tens of thousands of backcountry settlers determined the fate of the Revolution in South Carolina.

What makes the backcountry settler in South Carolina different from any other individual in any other colony who would participate in the war? The settlement of the South Carolina backcountry occurred mere decades before the outbreak of the Revolution. Though the backcountry was slowly moving towards integration with the coastal establishment, the war interrupted the process. Economically, politically, and socially, the backcountry differed from the sophisticated, wealthy, Anglicized society it bordered. As a result, the Whig government encountered opposition as it attempted to rally the backcountry to war. Given the lowcountry's record of political indifference towards the backcountry and the economic differences between the two regions, many

men had no desire to exchange a peaceful way of life and recently acquired economic stability for the havoc brought by war. Local concerns such as preventing the next Indian attack, getting the next crop to market, and establishing schools dominated the minds of the back-inhabitants, not abstract issues concerning a Parliament three thousand miles away.

This description of the backcountry directly challenges that of Rachel Klein, who downplays the sectional divide between the two regions by attacking the notion of the backcountry as an egalitarian frontier. According to Klein, the backcountry was not isolated because a rising planter elite within the backcountry, who wielded a great deal of power in their localities, shared common economic interests with the planter elite in the South Carolina lowcountry. While the fact that the vast majority of these rising planters took up arms for the Whigs is well-known, Klein goes further by arguing that lesser men of property followed their example. Her study, however, exaggerates the strength of deference in the backcountry and consequently, she gives the rising planter elite too much agency. In 1775 and 1776, deference had no bearing on the breakdown of allegiances for the vast majority of the white backcountry population. As mentioned above, the social, political, and economic conditions within the backcountry served as an obstacle to revolution. Yet, by the time the Declaration of Independence was signed, the Whigs controlled the entire province. If individuals did not defer to their Whig-leaning local leaders, how did the Whig government come to control the backcountry?

The Whig government employed intimidation tactics, threats of physical harm, the seizure or destruction of property, and economic warfare to neutralize those opposed to the revolutionary cause and to prevent the wavering from joining the opposition.

Violence was necessary because of the lack of ideological unity between the two regions, a result of differing political, economic, and social conditions. The Whig government conquered the backcountry in 1775 and early 1776 because the average backcountry settler sought something that loyalist and British forces could not offer: protection. Assessing why certain people chose one side over the other uncovers a variety of motivations, but protection, more than any other factor, allowed the Whigs to gain control of the backcountry and to neutralize the threat posed by loyalists. Without British troops to protect them, most backcountry settlers chose the path of least resistance and accepted Whig rule. When the British invaded in 1780, many of these same settlers would seek protection from the British army, reinforcing the idea that allegiance was not based on ideology.

The Whigs were also aided in their efforts by a major strategic error on the part of the British. While the Whigs attacked the Cherokee Indians in 1776, the bitter enemy of the backcountry settlers, the British sought to ally with the Cherokees and their Creek neighbors. Though the British did not intend to employ the Indians in a military campaign against the Whigs, the fears of back-settlers, who had endured Indian attacks in the past, compelled them to join the side that provided protection against future attacks.

Assessing the motivation of such an ethnically and religiously diverse population is no easy task and generalizations pervade the analysis. Such is the nature of the scholarship on the South Carolina backcountry. Historians have embarked upon specialized studies due to the ethnic and religious diversity of the region; this study, however, focuses on a single factor that can bridge these divides. Protection is a basic

human instinct; ethnic or religious differences have little bearing on the need to secure life and property.

Regardless of whether the study is a synthesis or highly specialized, both are plagued with source difficulties. In the aftermath of the war, thousands lay dead, while thousands of others fled the colony to escape Whig persecution, leaving behind precious little documentation describing why they remained loyal to the Crown. With their former enemies gone, the victors wrote a triumphant history of the war, disparaging or excluding the group that nearly thwarted their cause. The lack of written evidence complicates efforts to reconstruct the backcountry experience on the eve of Revolution. A definitive, conclusive answer may never be found. This study seeks to use the preconditions of the war as a means to infer the motives of individuals in choosing sides. Though no records exist to shed light on the decision-making process of a backcountry yeoman farmer, a wealth of information left behind from both Whigs and royal officials exists. When coupled with knowledge of what backcountry life was like on the eve of Revolution, these sources can help explain how the Whigs won control of the backcountry.

In hindsight, the fate of the Revolution in South Carolina was decided in 1775 and 1776. The fall of royal government and the transition to Whig administration created an opportunity for loyalists to assert themselves. Loyalist numbers peaked in 1775. By 1780, when the British attempted a full-scale invasion and occupation of the colony, the Whig government had rooted out and exiled prominent loyalists such as Thomas Brown. The rest remained in hiding, afraid to declare their allegiance unless the British offered them protection. At the front of their minds was an ill-conceived and poorly executed British expedition in 1776 under the command of Sir Henry Clinton. The rebels thwarted the

British attack, which bolstered their confidence and struck a blow to loyalist hopes. The British military offered the only safety from Whig oppression. Had Sir William Howe sent his army to Charleston instead of New York City in 1776, royal government might have been restored and back-settlers afforded the protection they sought. Loyalist militias rose up on their own in 1775 to prevent the entrenchment of Whig authority, but they would not stand up again unless the British could guarantee protection. When the British returned in 1780, they once again failed to offer the necessary protection and facilitated a civil war.

Any study of revolutionary allegiances, regardless of the colony, must examine the economic, political, and social conditions of the years leading to the Revolution. In South Carolina, these conditions had a major influence on determining allegiance as the war approached. Thus, an analysis of backcountry life serves as the point of departure for this study.

CHAPTER I

LIFE IN THE BACKCOUNTRY

Throughout the 18th century, tens of thousands of settlers left their lands in the backwoods of Pennsylvania to travel south along the Philadelphia Wagon Road in search of greater economic opportunity. This internal demographic shift, perhaps the largest in the colonial era, was markedly different from others, however. Though the migrants originated from a common location, they lacked homogeneity. Germans, Welsh, Scots, Scots-Irish, Dutch, and Swedes called the frontiers of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, home. Ethnic diversity produced a plurality of religious convictions. Presbyterians, Baptists, Quakers, Nonconformists, and a plethora of other groups stood in contrast to the Anglicized lowcountry.

In 1952, Carl Bridenbaugh published a series of lectures entitled *Myths and Realities: Societies of the Colonial South* in which he conceived of the backcountry in a regional sense, declaring it one of three distinct “souths” (the Chesapeake and Carolina society [South Carolina] comprising the other two). The significance of Bridenbaugh’s work was his notion that settlement of the southern backcountry was not the product of east-west migration but rather a north-south pipeline. Consequently, Bridenbaugh argued

that the backcountry formed a unique cultural identity that differed from the coastal societies it bordered.²

Though the mere novelty of the backcountry settlements may have produced a distinct culture, many historians have argued that settlers sought to integrate themselves into the established coastal societies. However, this integration did not occur immediately. In 1984, Jack P. Greene proposed a framework designed to analyze the social development of colonial British America. Greene's framework serves as a vital tool in examining the social development of the southern backcountry. Greene proposed three stages of development: social simplification, social elaboration, and social replication. By the mid-18th century, coastal societies in Virginia and the Carolinas managed to replicate British culture. Economic prosperity, a rigid social hierarchy, and a demand for consumer goods allowed vital southern centers such as Williamsburg and Charleston to achieve social replication. The backcountry, however, lagged behind. Though the backcountry did not develop uniformly along a north-south axis, the youth of most backcountry settlements has caused numerous historians, among them Richard Beeman, Rachel Klein, and Richard Brown to describe conditions in line with the processes of social simplification or social elaboration. Greene described the first stage of social simplification as:

. . . characterized by much unsettlement and disorientation, as people sought to find ways to manipulate their new environments for their own sustenance and advantage while endeavoring, with limited success, to impose upon that environment social arrangements that, except possibly in

² Carl Bridenbaugh, *Myths and Realities: Societies of the Colonial South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1952).

the orthodox colonies of Puritan New England, bore little more than a crude resemblance to those they had left behind.³

Settlers left Pennsylvania in search of more affordable land in greater quantities, but high mobility, a harsh environment, and dispersed settlements forced them to abandon their host values in full and adapt to their new surroundings.

As the population grew, as settlements expanded, and as the economy matured, settlers experienced a process of social elaboration. This phase “involved the articulation of socioeconomic, political, and cultural institutions, structures, and values that, although they were usually highly creolized variants of those found in the more developed areas of Britain, were sufficiently functional to enable local populations to assimilate them with relatively little difficulty.”⁴ The backcountry, for the most part, did not replicate the coastal economy, causing back-settlers to create an economy characterized by “highly creolized variants.” Richard Beeman, in his study *Evolution of the Southern Backcountry: A Case Study of Lunenburg County, Virginia, 1746-1832*, noted that the quality of soil in the backcountry prohibited settlers from cultivating the same type of tobacco produced on tidewater plantations. This lower quality tobacco did not net the same profits as tidewater tobacco. Other obstacles settlers in the backcountry faced included increased transportation costs due to geographic barriers, a chronic shortage of white labor given the wide accessibility of land, and the slow integration of slaves into the backcountry. As a result, farmers turned to foodstuffs. Consequently, the tobacco production that had

³ Jack P. Greene and J.R. Pole, eds., *Colonial British America: Essays in the New History of the Early Modern Era* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1984), 13.

⁴ *Ibid.*

allowed the tidewater gentry to replicate British behaviors and norms failed to take root in the backcountry, leaving settlers with a less stratified social structure.⁵

In South Carolina, the backcountry lacked the rice plantations that had made the province the wealthiest of all British colonies. Like their counterparts in Virginia, South Carolina back-settlers had no reliable source of labor. Due to bands of criminals roaming the countryside during the 1760s, lowcountry merchants refused to sell slaves to backcountry farmers. Coastal officials did not want criminals, many of whom were mulatto, to seize possession of slaves or provide safe haven for runaways. In the absence of a reliable labor source, as in Virginia, most back-settlers turned to foodstuffs. As George Lloyd Johnson pointed out in his community study of the Upper Pee Dee region, “wealth was intimately tied to slavery in the South Carolina backcountry.”⁶ But the backcountry lacked the number of slaves necessary to produce the wealth that lowcountry planters enjoyed. Moreover, as T.H. Breen, in an essay in Jack Greene and J.R. Pole’s *Colonial British America: Essays in the New History of the Early Modern Era*, noted, “Agriculture which was everywhere the occupation of the first settlers, was not enough to cast them all in one mold, since there are certain types of agriculture [mixed agriculture] which tend to maintain equal wealth among individuals, and other types [staple agriculture] which tend to destroy it.”⁷ Since slaves were in short supply and the land did

⁵ Richard Beeman, *The Evolution of the Southern Backcountry: A Case Study of Lunenburg County, Virginia, 1746-1832* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984), 33-35.

⁶ George Lloyd Johnson, *The Frontier in the Colonial South: South Carolina Backcountry, 1736-1800* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1997), 79.

⁷ T.H. Breen, “Creative Adaptations: People and Cultures,” Chapter 7 in Greene and Pole, *Colonial British America*, 213.

not support staple agriculture, the South Carolina backcountry economy, like its partner in Virginia, preserved greater equality among its inhabitants.

The idea of backcountry society copying the norms of the coastal establishment is found in a seminal study of the South Carolina backcountry: Rachel Klein's *Unification of a Slave State: The Rise of a Planter Class in the South Carolina Backcountry, 1760-1808*. Klein questions the credit cotton has received for unifying South Carolina in the aftermath of the Revolution. Instead, she posits that the framework for integration existed in the backcountry in the form of a rising elite who shared common economic interests with coastal planters. Fundamental to Klein's argument is her conception of the nature of authority in the backcountry. She asserts that the rising elite were "men of influence" in their respective regions due to their economic clout and political authority.⁸ As storeowners, speculators, mill operators, militia officers, and justices of the peace, this small portion of the population established themselves as leaders of backcountry society. Rebuking Frederick Jackson Turner's vision of the frontier as egalitarian and anti-authoritarian, Klein portrays a backcountry moving towards a stratified social order. Her examination of the Regulator Movement promotes this point.

In the wake of the devastation wrought by the Cherokee War of 1759-1761, bands of criminals targeted back-settlers, rendering the economy unstable and property unsafe. Without any courts in the backcountry, any criminal arrested had to be brought to Charleston; but the difficulty of traveling to the coast allowed criminals to escape justice. When the colonial assembly refused to take action, men throughout the backcountry started a vigilante movement to bring these criminals to justice. Though many historians

⁸ Klein, *Unification of a Slave State*, 84-85.

have viewed the Regulator Movement as proof of a sectional divide between the backcountry and lowcountry, Klein rejects this notion. She asserts that coastal leaders sympathized with Regulator demands for courts and other government institutions, but that colonial protests against the Stamp Act and other parliamentary efforts to tax the colonies prevented the assembly from taking action. Klein points to a fundamental social problem in the backcountry between two groups: hunters and planters. While planters sought to establish property rights and establish markets for their goods, hunters lived as nomads, killing cattle and squatting on land, including Indian lands which exposed the entire backcountry to attack. Since most hunters became criminals, the Regulators acted not only to petition the Assembly for courts and other government institutions but also to correct “a fundamental social disunity.”⁹ South Carolina was one of few colonies that lacked a vagrancy law. Moreover, the lack of government institutions allowed acts of drunkenness, sexual impropriety, and other forms of immorality to go unpunished. In response, the Regulators captured and whipped the poor and indigent, an act that Klein views as establishing a particular type of social order in line with the interests of the rising elite.

Klein’s study is significant in discussing the Revolution because she asserts that the influence and authority the rising elite held in their respective regions determined the breakdown of allegiances. Since only 6 of 120 leading Regulators were active loyalists, Klein posits that these “men of influence” deserve credit for helping to secure the backcountry for the Whigs. Klein’s argument that the rising elite shared a common economic interest with coastal planters is correct. However, Klein grants too much

⁹ Richard Maxwell Brown, *The South Carolina Regulators* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 1963), 24.

agency to the rising elite. As Ronald Hoffman noted, “The incompatibility of two major values, equality and deference, which had been developing during the colonial era, reached the point of crucial confrontation during the Revolution.”¹⁰ For Klein to assert that deference trumped equality is to brush aside notions of independence and authority found in other works that undermine her argument.

In an introductory essay to a collection of essays on the backcountry during the American Revolution, Jack Greene submitted a framework for understanding the backcountry by addressing the issues of independence, improvement, and authority. Greene argued that widespread independence existed in the American colonies due to extensive opportunities for landownership. Greene defines independence as “freedom from the will of others. . . a sovereignty of self in all public and private relations.”¹¹ “No social excuse” for failure existed given the opportunities for success. In order to enjoy their independence to the fullest extent, Greene argued settlers worked to improve their societies. Improvement did not involve the creation of a brand new society; rather, settlers looked east to recreate British society through social simplification, elaboration, and replication. Fundamental to Greene’s notion of improvement is the desire of independent men to exploit other men by making them their dependents and to create a deferential social order.¹²

¹⁰Ronald Hoffman, “The ‘Disaffected’ in the Revolutionary South,” in Alfred F. Young ed., *The American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1976), 300.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹² Jack P. Greene, “Independence, Improvement, and Authority: Towards a Framework for Understanding the Histories of the Southern Backcountry during the Era of the American Revolution,” in Ronald Hoffman, Thad W. Tate, and Peter J. Albert, eds., *An Uncivil War: The Southern Backcountry during the American Revolution* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1985), 13.

Though Greene emphasized the desire of each new society to build a social hierarchy, he questioned the strength of such models. Despite the move towards a society based on concepts of hierarchy and deference, authority within the backcountry and the colonies at large remained fragile. Opportunities for land ownership reduced dependence. Deference no longer served as an instrument of social control as economic opportunities narrowed the gap between elites and non-elites. Political figureheads were empowered through “passive noninterest.” Greene argued that individuals came to America seeking freedom to pursue their private interests, not to meddle in public affairs, and relinquished their right to pursue public office. Thus, elites governed by default. When individuals did take action and defy authority, they did so in defense of their independence.¹³

Greene’s notions of widespread independence and weak authority challenges Klein’s notion that the elite men of the backcountry wielded enough personal and political clout to secure the backcountry for the Whigs. Klein correctly declares that the backcountry sought to replicate lowcountry norms. The Regulator Movement, in her eyes, was a plea for structure and authority based on the stratified social order of lowcountry society. Greene admitted, however, that independence weakened deferential authority. Although men sought to exploit each other and to create a deferential order based on dependency, they could not because backcountry conditions created a society where men achieved “freedom from the will of others.”

Three-fourths of South Carolina’s white population resided beyond the piedmont, yet Klein gives agency only to a minority. Klein’s neglect of the non-elite within the backcountry clashes with Greene’s contention of widespread independence. Klein holds

¹³ *Ibid.*, 22-36.

to Richard Brown's assertion in *The South Carolina Regulators* that the Regulator movement was designed to create a specific social order in line with the interests of the planter class; in doing so, she rejects the notion that the Regulator movement was a popular movement. Yet, in her own work, Klein cited a comment from an observer of Regulator activity: "Every Man of Property is a Regulator at Heart."¹⁴ Such a statement suggests the backcountry movement was more than the handiwork of the rising elite, given the widespread diffusion of property. Because a majority of back-settlers wanted their private property secured and civil order restored, Klein exaggerates the authority of the rising elite.

Moreover, despite Klein's contention that the backcountry desired slaves, one particular event (which she omits from her analysis) during the Regulator movement threatened to shatter white unity in a colony highly susceptible to slave insurrection. A tense encounter between the Regulators and an armed force dispatched by the colonial governor nearly led to an invasion of the lowcountry by the Regulators. The severity of the encounter was best described by Charles Woodmason, an Anglican itinerant and Regulator spokesman, who wrote, "The People were about to march downward and destroy all the Plantations of those Gentlemen whom they thought in the Plot – And it was with difficulty they were restrain'd"¹⁵ The interests of the backcountry and lowcountry did not seem to align in this instance, despite Klein's assertion that the

¹⁴ Klein, *Unification of a Slave State*, 61.

¹⁵ Richard J. Hooker, ed., *The Carolina Backcountry on the Eve of the Revolution: The Journal and Other Writings of Charles Woodmason, Anglican Itinerant* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1953), 181-83.

coastal establishment sympathized with Regulator demands and the elite shared common interests.

Another work that challenges Klein's thesis is Wayne Lee's *Crowds and Soldiers in Revolutionary North Carolina: The Culture of Violence in Riot and War*. Lee examines the use of violence as a means of political protest, which has traditionally been viewed by historians as a rejection of authority and challenge to the social order. Lee rejects this view, arguing that violence was a means of communication for those alienated from the formal political process; he posits that rioters were restrained by the need to appear legitimate to the larger popular community.¹⁶ According to Lee, "Rioters patterned their behavior in order to emphasize the legitimacy of their actions, and the need to appear legitimate arose from the simple fact that the tool of the rioter was violence, with all its implications of threatening the social order."¹⁷ Lee's analysis of the North Carolina Regulators demonstrates the power of public opinion. The Regulators did not turn to armed conflict when they had a grievance; they followed a path of legal recourse before taking up arms. But even when they did resort to violence, their actions were restrained. When they besieged the Hillsborough courthouse, the act that provided the impetus for Governor Tyron to attack the Regulators, they chose their targets carefully. In an earlier confrontation, Governor Tyron refrained from attacking the Regulators, recognizing that the public would not consider his use of violence to be politically legitimate. Lee's study exposed the authority each individual held in determining what was politically legitimate.

¹⁶ Wayne E. Lee, *Crowds and Soldiers in Revolutionary North Carolina: The Culture of Violence in Riot and War* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001), 7, 43.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

When Lee's study of violence and political legitimacy is applied to South Carolina, the idea of a rising elite embodying authority in the backcountry continues to fall apart. The Regulators encountered opposition through their use of violence, but this opposition came from within the backcountry rather than from the socially mature lowcountry. Citizens objected to the beatings and whippings used by Regulators to root out the indigent and correct the social ills of backcountry society. The Moderators, who Regulator expert Richard Brown claimed were more numerous than historians have acknowledged, openly opposed these Regulator methods and, as a result, brought an end to the Regulator movement.¹⁸ Klein dismisses the Moderators as belonging to the lower echelons of society and opposed to the goals of the rising elite. But the rise of the Moderators revealed that the Regulators lacked political legitimacy in their use of violence and individuals possessed the authority necessary to stop them. Though Klein extols the influence and clout of the rising elite, the power to determine what was politically legitimate was rooted in widespread independence and an aversion to a deferential order.

Klein's depiction of the Moderators as belonging to the lower echelons of society points to a larger issue of class conflict. She argued that, "Conflict within the Revolutionary backcountry may not have been a class struggle in any simple sense, but it did have an important class dimension."¹⁹ Klein asserts that this class dimension was visible in the clash of interests between Regulator planters and the indigent hunters whose behavior they sought to correct. However, such a statement imposes far too much economic homogeneity on both Whigs and loyalists. As Robert Lambert noted in the only

¹⁸ Brown, *South Carolina Regulators*, chapter 6.

¹⁹ Klein, *Unification of a Slave State*, 81.

published study of loyalists in South Carolina, the large loyalist army captured by the Whigs in late 1775 was economically diverse. The force consisted of men owning anywhere from 100 to 1,500 acres. While some produced substantial amounts of grain, indigo, and livestock with slave labor, others cleared only enough land to subsist without the help of negroes.²⁰ Both hunters and men of prominence in the backcountry opposed the Whigs.

Economics forms the crux of Richard Beeman's argument, another historian whose study of the Virginia backcountry implicitly challenges Klein's findings. Beeman, like Klein, acknowledges the existence of elite individuals in Lunenburg County, but he chronicles the conditions that prevented them from establishing a deferential society, conditions not unlike those in South Carolina. Beeman drew a line between personal authority and political authority. Whereas tidewater planters amassed a fortune through tobacco cultivation and land speculation that served as a means of persuasion and influence, the local elite in Lunenburg County lacked the personal wealth and influence necessary to command respect from their peers.²¹ Additionally, the elite opted to forgo luxury goods in favor of using that money to purchase slaves; thus, they lacked the consumer goods so crucial in denoting gentility.²² The economic shortcomings of the local elite were exposed by Glasgow merchants who provided credit to small farmers when the local elite came up short.²³ Despite a large influx of slaves in the 1750s and 1760s, a social hierarchy failed to form. During the economic growth of those decades,

²⁰ Robert Lambert, *South Carolina Loyalists in the American Revolution* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1987), 49.

²¹ Beeman, *The Evolution of the Southern Backcountry*, 95.

²² *Ibid.*, 77.

²³ *Ibid.*, 79.

the poor enjoyed an increase in overall land ownership and more yeoman farmers owned slaves in Lunenburg County than in any tidewater county.²⁴ In general, a higher standard of living resulted for all residents. Without personal authority, these elite men were unable to effectively exercise their authority as officeholders. The widespread independence Greene proposed as a framework certainly applied to Lunenburg County, Virginia, economically as well as politically. Contested elections and massive “treating” of the masses exposed the lack of a deferential order.²⁵

The backcountries in the various colonies did not achieve the same economic prosperity as the coastal societies they neighbored. Consequently, as Beeman noted, the rising elite failed to differentiate themselves from the yeoman majority and to command their respect as figures of authority. The presence of criminals throughout the 1760s hindered the spread of slavery into the South Carolina backcountry, the cornerstone upon which the stratified social order in the lowcountry was built. In the absence of a reliable labor source back-settlers turned to foodstuffs. The staple crops that had enriched the coastal elite were not easily transplanted to the backcountry. Consequently, the local elite lacked the personal wealth that was necessary to wield personal authority. Even though the local elite held positions of political power, their lack of wealth undermined their formal authority due to a narrow economic gap between elite and yeoman farmers.

The failure to unify the backcountry economically with the lowcountry stemmed from the differing stages of development that Greene outlined. The backcountry lagged behind the established coastal societies because settlement had occurred towards the end of the colonial era; though the backcountry was making strides, its progress was

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 66-67.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 91-95.

interrupted by the Revolution. Two regions at two different stages of development consequently produced conflicting interests. Ronald Hoffman provided an example of this conflict. Wheat cultivation in the Carolina piedmont had produced economic prosperity but it was threatened by colonial protests such as the Continental Association, which prohibited the exportation of all agricultural goods to Britain, except rice. The Continental Association demanded that farmers give up their prosperity for abstract principles. The back-settlers opposed participation; as Hoffman stated, “they were not given to concerns about individual liberties and natural rights. What they wanted most seemed little enough: modest good fortune and some security in their lives.”²⁶ The Continental Association, a creation of coastal planters and merchants, was not in the best interest of back-settlers, and they did not abide by the agreement out of deference to their political leaders. As Hoffman noted:

The incompatibility of two major values, equality and deference, which had been developing during the colonial era, reached the point of crucial confrontation during the Revolution. Consequently, when the revolutionary leadership placed heavy demands on the people – demands in many ways more oppressive than the comparatively mild tyranny of Parliament – many men, especially those with limited involvement in their political culture, resented and resisted them.²⁷

Jack Greene asserted that widespread independence weakened authority. Men preferred to pursue their private interests rather than meddle in public affairs. However, the Revolution created a situation where private interests clashed with public affairs. Consequently, individuals prioritized their local concerns at the expense of the greater good.²⁸ Because the rising elite, whose interests paralleled the coastal elite more so than

²⁶ Ronald Hoffman, “The ‘Disaffected’ in the Revolutionary South,” 299-300.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 300.

²⁸ Greene, “Independence, Improvement, Authority,” 23.

their yeoman neighbors, did not exercise strong authority, local concerns dominated backcountry politics.

When evidence of economic differences, widespread independence, and weak authority within the backcountry are taken as a whole, the coastal governments faced a daunting task in galvanizing support for the revolutionary cause. Though Klein is right to challenge her predecessors' notion of a staunch sectional divide between the backcountry and the lowcountry on the basis of the Regulator Movement, her explanation for how the Whigs gained control of the backcountry is insufficient given evidence provided by other historians and weaknesses within her own argument. Ties between the two regions were not strong enough to produce unity based on a shared ideology of self-rule and republicanism. Rev. Charles Woodmason demonstrated the ease with which back-settlers could turn the same republican rhetoric coastal leaders were using against Parliament on their own colonial government when he wrote: "We are *Free-Men* – British Subjects – Not Born *Slaves* – We contribute our Proportion in all Public Taxations, and discharge our Duty to the Public, equally with our Fellow Provincials Ye[t] We do not participate with them in the Rights and Benefits which they Enjoy, tho' equally Entitled to them."²⁹ The legacy of the Regulator Movement created bitterness in the backcountry, but historians have overstated the importance of this movement in creating antagonism to the independence movement. The wider picture of economic, political, and social development serves as a more convincing answer to the question of why the South Carolina backcountry produced such opposition to the patriot cause. The question that remains to be answered is what Whig forces planned to do about this opposition.

²⁹ Hooker, *The Carolina Backcountry on the Eve of Revolution*, 215.

CHAPTER II

INTIMIDATION

In June 1775, the South Carolina Council of Safety, one of two extralegal political organizations developed by the Whigs, dispatched a three-man committee into the backcountry to “explain to the people at large the nature of the unhappy disputes between Great Britain and the American Colonies.”³⁰ The three-man committee was made up of William Henry Drayton, a prominent politician and arguably South Carolina’s most vehement patriot, the Rev. William Tennent, head of the Independent (Presbyterian) Church of Charleston, and the Rev. Oliver Hart, a Baptist minister of humble roots. Given the isolation of the backcountry from colonial protests, the mission of these three men was to take ten years of revolutionary fervor and convey it to the backcountry in two months. Words of persuasion failed early and often, and the committee, spearheaded by Drayton, turned to intimidation in order to overcome the differences between the regions.

Enthusiasm for the Whigs ran low in the backcountry. One month into the mission, Tennent wrote to Henry Laurens, “They [back-settlers] firmly believe that no

³⁰ Order of Council of Safety, July 23, 1775, in R.W. Gibbes, ed., *Documentary History of the American Revolution: Consisting of Letters and Papers Relating to the Contest for Liberty, Chiefly in South Carolina, in the Possession of the Editor, and Other Sources*, Vols 1-3 (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1855), 1:106. NOTE: Any further citations refer to volume one unless otherwise noted.

man that comes from below, and that no paper printed there can speak the truth.”³¹ Oliver Hart recorded in his diary that “Some of the neighbors came to see us, with whom we had much Conversation about the present State of the Times; found them so fixed on the Side of the Ministry, that no argument on the contrary Side seemed to have any weight with them; they generally acknowledge that they know but little about the Matter, and yet are fixed.”³² A pamphlet circulating throughout the backcountry entitled *An Address of the People of Great Britain to the Inhabitants of America*, reminded the back-settlers that “It is hard that the charge of our intending to enslave you should come oftenest from the mouths of those lawyers who in your southern provinces at least, have long made you slaves to themselves.”³³

William Henry Drayton, with his fiery oratorical skills, sought to overcome the ignorance of the back-settlers that Hart spoke of and to educate them on the matter of revolution. But Drayton’s use of rhetoric fell on deaf ears. His advocacy of republicanism had little effect on men who were underrepresented in the Assembly. The Whigs had their work cut out for them. The nature of the opposition was best exemplified by one back-settler who expressed a desire to see one thousand Bostonians killed in battle.³⁴ Given the challenges before him, Drayton thought it necessary to carry a pair of pistols and a sword at all times.³⁵

³¹ Mr. Tennent to Mr. Laurens, August 20, 1775, in Gibbes, *Doc. Hist.*, 145.

³² “Oliver Hart’s Diary of the Journey to the Backcountry,” in *Journal of the South Carolina Baptist Historical Society*, vol. 1 (November 1775), 20.

³³ Gary Olson, “Loyalists and the American Revolution: Thomas Brown and the South Carolina Backcountry, 1775-1776, in *South Carolina Historical Magazine* [SCHM] 68, no. 4 (October 1967), 210.

³⁴ “Oliver Hart’s Diary,” 20-21.

³⁵ Keith Krawczynski, *William Henry Drayton: South Carolina Revolutionary Patriot* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001), 163.

On numerous occasions, Drayton and Tennent ordered residents of towns to assemble only to have no one show up, or if they did, they often refused to sign the Association. At a Dutch Church, Drayton gave a speech to a group of ethnic Germans, but not one of them stepped forward to sign the Association. Thomas Fletchall, an influential militia colonel, on orders from the Council of Safety, mustered his regiment and read them the Association. When his men refused to sign it, Fletchall reported, “it was out of my power to compel them to.”³⁶ The early opposition Drayton encountered surely wounded his pride. Drayton was not humble about his rhetorical skills. During one discourse he proclaimed, “the falling tears from the audience showed that their hearts were penetrated, and that we might hope for success.”³⁷ But Drayton’s faith in the power of his rhetoric is hard to reconcile with accusations of a prominent loyalist that Drayton intentionally returned lists of associators containing duplicate names to the Provincial Congress.³⁸

Drayton’s words of persuasion did not resonate with the diverse backcountry population. His task was to find some way, as Fletchall said, to “compel them.” The Provincial Congress in June 1775 passed measures designed to polarize society. The Congress resolved that “any person having violated or refused obedience to the authority of the Provincial Congress, shall. . . be questioned. . . and upon due conviction of either of the offenses aforesaid, and continuing contumacious, such person shall. . . be declared and advertised, as an enemy to the Liberties of America, and *an object for the resentment*

³⁶ Thomas Fletchall to President of Council of Safety, July 24, 1775, in Gibbes, *Doc. Hist.*, 123-4.

³⁷ From Mr. Drayton, Aug. 9, 1775, in *ibid.*, 134

³⁸ “A Loyalist View of the Drayton-Tennent-Hart Mission to the Backcountry,” *SCHM* 67, no. 1 (January 1966), 18.

of the public. . . .”³⁹ The Provincial Congress could advertise the names of those enemies of liberty all it wanted, but without some means of enforcement, the resolution was nothing more than empty rhetoric.

The Whigs found a solution in economic warfare. The Council of Safety attempted to marginalize those in opposition to independence by limiting trade opportunities and cutting off access to essential commercial services. While promoting the revolutionary cause to a Dutch audience during his backcountry tour, Drayton declared that “no non-subscriber in this settlement will be allowed to purchase at, or sell to this store of Charles Town.”⁴⁰ A few days later, Drayton addressed another group of Dutchmen, yet they refused to sign the Association. In response, Drayton decreed, “no miller, who was a subscriber, should grind wheat or corn for any person who was a nonsubscriber.” According to Drayton, “This gave an immediate shock and has given a general alarm among the Dutch, from which. . . I expect a desirable effect.”⁴¹ Millers and blacksmiths refused to serve those who joined the enemy.⁴² Governor William Campbell bemoaned the treatment of non-associators when he wrote to the Earl of Dartmouth:

For their attachment to their King and the constitution of their country, they are cut off from the only mart they had for their little produce and from the only place where they could supply their necessities. Salt, that most necessary article to their very existence, they are totally deprived of, which will render it impossible for them to preserve their winter provisions; they can neither have ammunition to defend themselves nor clothes to cover them.⁴³

³⁹ William Edwin Hemphill, ed., *Extracts from the Journals of the Provincial Congress of South Carolina, 1775-1776* (Columbia: South Carolina Archives Department, 1960), 59.

⁴⁰ Drayton to Tennent, August 7, 1775, in Gibbes, *Doc. Hist.*, 128-131

⁴¹ Drayton to Council of Safety, August 16, 1775, in *ibid.*, 141.

⁴² Klein, *Unification of a Slave State*, 86.

⁴³ Lord Governor William Campbell to Earl of Dartmouth, Oct. 19, 1775, in K.G. Davies, ed., *Documents of the American Revolution, 1770-1783 (Colonial Office Series)*, Vols 1-21 (Dublin: Irish University Press), 10:156.

Scottish Highlanders were afraid to take up arms against the Whigs for fear of having their property seized. While the Highlanders would not be active Whigs, more importantly, they were not active supporters of the Crown.⁴⁴

The Council of Safety recognized the need to draw economic battle lines and to preserve certain privileges for those friendly to the independence movement, lest these individuals jump ship. Drayton reported to the Council of Safety, “I have to assure you that unless our friends in the country find that the non-subscribers are debarred all communication with Charles Town and all trade with the country stores, they will be much chagrined; and bad consequences may ensue.”⁴⁵ In order to ensure that non-associators were economically marginalized, Drayton ordered a guard of troops to be placed near the western entrances of Charleston to check whether those bringing wagons and trade goods to the city had signed the Association.⁴⁶

* * * * *

Economic warfare may have spurred many potential loyalists to sign the Association, but a greater threat to the revolutionary cause came from the presence of royal officials. So long as the royal government existed in the colony, the non-associators felt protected. Gov. William Campbell had written numerous pamphlets to the backcountry from Charleston criticizing Whig actions and emphasizing the sectional divide. Drayton acknowledged the threat the governor posed:

He animates these men – he tempts them – and although they are now recovered, yet their fidelity is precarious, if he is at liberty to job them

⁴⁴ David Wilson, *The Southern Strategy: Britain's Conquest of South Carolina and Georgia, 1775-1780* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2005), 23.

⁴⁵ Drayton to Council of Safety, Aug. 21, 1775, in *ibid.*, 150.

⁴⁶ Drayton and Tennent to Council of Safety, Aug. 9, 1775, in *ibid.*, 132.

again, and lay new toils for them. Gentlemen, allow me, in the strongest terms, to recommend that you make hostages of the Governor and the officers.⁴⁷

By September 1775, Drayton and the Whigs earned a major victory when the governor fled to a British warship in Charleston Harbor, ending royal authority and allowing the Whigs to govern without formal opposition.

At the heart of the need to topple royal government was the issue of authority, an issue that had special meaning for the backcountry. Authority, as suggested by the lack of formal institutions and widespread independence in the backcountry, was never as strong as it was in the lowcountry. The average backcountry farmer went about their day-to-day tasks without feeling the pressing hand of government due to the lack of courts, schools, and Anglican churches. Furthermore, the lack of political integration also contributed to the emphasis on local concerns at the expense of provincial needs. Thus, the backcountry was not beholden to the Council of Safety or to the Provincial Congress. After all, the Council of Safety was comprised of thirteen men, eight of whom resided in Charleston and the remaining five came from the surrounding lowcountry.⁴⁸ The backcountry had no representation; given the fact that three-fourths of South Carolina's white inhabitants resided in the backcountry, the actions of the Council of Safety was the handiwork of a minority. The only way to compel men to join the Whig cause was by bringing a greater degree of authority to the backcountry through the use of the militia. The militia represented the hand of authority in an area long devoid of government institutions; it

⁴⁷ Mr. Drayton to Council of Safety, Sept. 17, 1775 in Gibbes., *Doc. Hist.*, 189.

⁴⁸ Jerome Nadelhaft, *The Disorders of War: The Revolution in South Carolina* (Orono, ME: University of Maine at Orono Press, 1981), 23.

carried out the will of the Whig government and suppressed political dissent.⁴⁹ Drayton's words of persuasion had failed to sway a region not interested in Revolution. Even he recognized the need for new methods when he wrote to the Council of Safety, "vigorous measures are absolutely necessary. . . In giving you this information, I tell a melancholy truth; but I do my duty."⁵⁰

Using threats of physical violence to influence political allegiance was not a tactic created as a result of the backcountry challenge. Physical intimidation was used long before the militia marched to the backcountry in the form of the Charleston mob. As the fourth-largest city in the American colonies and, like any city, a hotbed of merchants, Charleston housed a high concentration of individuals opposed to independence. Although one observer noted that "great numbers" opposed subscribing their names to "so treasonable an engagement. . . few dared refuse," for fear of retribution from "the fury of a desperate and vindictive mob."⁵¹ The urban mob was responsible for helping to make Charleston safe for Whig government and allowed the revolutionaries to turn their attention to the backcountry.

The Council of Safety and Provincial Congress moved quickly and discreetly to organize a militia. In early June, the Provincial Congress proposed raising two regiments of infantry of 750 men each and a cavalry regiment of 500; in order to fund the militia,

⁴⁹ For more on the militia as an instrument of suppressing political dissent see, Clyde R. Ferguson, "Carolina and Georgia Patriot and Loyalist Militia in Action, 1778-1783," in Jeffrey J. Crow and Larry E. Tise, eds., *The Southern Experience in the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978.), 174-199. See also Jack Greene's essay in Hoffman, *An Uncivil War*, 30-34 for more on how weak authority and localism created the circumstances by which the Whig militias were forced to intervene.

⁵⁰ Drayton to the Council of Safety, Aug. 21, 1775, in Gibbes, *Doc. Hist.*, 153.

⁵¹ Krawczynski, *Drayton*, 137.

the Congress issued 150,000 pounds of paper money.⁵² While these new forces were raised initially with the purpose of defending against a slave revolt, Drayton traveled throughout the backcountry and, when his rhetoric failed, made threats that these new, loyal regiments were capable of carrying out.

The formation of a Whig militia not only offered a way to carry out the wishes of the Whig government, it provided opposition to loyalist forces in the region. Armed skirmishes were few and far between; both sides relied on posturing and a show of force rather than an actual shooting war to intimidate undecided parties into joining or preventing them from supporting the opposition. The Whigs' ability to attract greater numbers ultimately contributed to their victory. Drayton observed that "the whole country, that is the King's men as they are called, were terrified by the march and the cannon" as he traveled with the militia between towns. In another observation Drayton proclaimed, "it is plain their [loyalist] influence is declining, and that their people are terrified. And this last, I assure you, is a fact. They never dreamed we would take the field; they thought their boast of 4,000 would ensure their security against us."⁵³

Drayton used the militia to make examples of those who openly opposed the Whig government. Moses Kirkland, a former Regulator, served as a Whig militia officer but switched sides when he was passed over for a promotion. Drayton ordered his plantation ransacked; five thousand weight of indigo was destroyed and sixty slaves were confiscated.⁵⁴ Drayton also issued a declaration declaring that "all such persons as,

⁵² "Charles Town Loyalism in 1775: The Secret Reports of Alexander Innes," in *SCHM* 63, no. 3 (July 1962), 133.

⁵³ Mr. Drayton to Council of Safety, Sept. 11, 1775, in Gibbes, *Doc. Hist.*, 173-175.

⁵⁴ Extract from an Intercepted Letter of Frederick George Mulcaster to Governor Grant, Sept. 29, 1775, in *ibid.*, 197.

without lawful authority, shall assemble in arms, in company with, or by instigation of the said Moses Kirkland, *will be deemed public enemies to be suppressed by the sword* [my emphasis].”⁵⁵ The edict “so terrified Kirkland’s followers, that now he is in a manner alone, and having tried every effort to procure assistance on the south side of Saluda in vain, he is now invisible – is never two hours in a place, and he never sleeps in a house.”⁵⁶

Drayton did not confine the threats to men of influence like Kirkland. In September 1775, in the most western area of South Carolina, the Ninety-Six district, a confrontation ensued between loyalist and patriot forces. Drayton marched into the town of Ninety-Six and ordered the militia to muster. Under a newly ratified provincial law, he punished those who refused. He declared, “I shall march and attack, as public enemies, all and every person in arms, or to be in arms, in this part of the Colony, in opposition to the measures of Congress.”⁵⁷ He made good on his threat by dispatching parties with orders to “rifle houses break locks and seize the papers of those who had opposed the Designs of Congress.”⁵⁸ Because of Drayton’s tactics, Thomas Fletchall, who lived in the Ninety-Six district, was “so struck with terror” that the “poor Bastard . . . went so far as to acquaint Drayton that it was his opinion that we [loyalists] should submit to any terms.”⁵⁹ Days after the confrontation, a treaty was signed between the Whig government and the people of Ninety-Six. So long as the people of the district “shall choose to behave peaceably,” they were permitted to keep their property. The subsequent peace speaks

⁵⁵ South Carolina – Ninety-Six District, Aug. 30, 1775, in *ibid.*, 164.

⁵⁶ Mr. Drayton to Council of Safety, Sept. 11, 1775, in *ibid.*, 173.

⁵⁷ Declaration, South Carolina – Ninety-Six District, Sept. 13, 1775, in *ibid.*, 182-3.

⁵⁸ “Loyalist View of Drayton-Tennent-Hart Mission,” 19.

⁵⁹ Krawczynsky, *Drayton*, 188.

volumes about the nature of the opposition to the Whigs. When confronted with direct force, the back-settlers of the Ninety-Six district chose to acquiesce to Whig authority in order to pursue their private ends. While in the peace accord they affirmed their desire to remain a part of the British empire, they also promised not to support British troops in the event of an invasion.⁶⁰ Political ideology played very little role in determining allegiance. Drayton's intimidation tactics at Ninety-Six sidelined hundreds, if not thousands, of potential loyalists.

The polarizing tactics of the Whig leadership quickly penetrated down through the ranks of the militia. Col. William Thomson, a militia commander, wrote to Henry Laurens boasting that his men were beginning to "observe that those who are not for America, are undoubtedly against it. Such discourses we hear spreading through our camps, and I have reason to believe is their determination." He expressed hope that by "putting militia law in force against the defaulters," loyalist efforts would fail.⁶¹

Though Drayton and the Whigs did implement "militia law" and punish those who opposed them, Drayton also bluffed to scare people into submission. Thomas Brown intercepted a letter en route from Drayton to Whig colonel Richard Richardson. The letter contained instructions to Richardson to raise a party of men to join those already under Drayton's command in ransacking and burning the plantations of non-associators.⁶² Drayton had sent the letter intending for it to be intercepted by the loyalists.

⁶⁰ Treaty of Ninety-Six in Gibbes, *Doc. Hist.*, 84-86.

⁶¹ Col. Thomson to Mr. Laurens, Nov. 28, 1775, in *ibid.*, 223.

⁶² "Loyalist View of Drayton-Tennent-Hart Mission," 21.

Drayton did not want to shed blood. He recognized that violence would have “laid the foundation for lasting animosities.”⁶³ In addition, Whig victory was not guaranteed if the two forces came to battle. While besieged at Ninety-Six in November 1775, the commanding officer, Major Andrew Williamson, wrote to Drayton that Whig forces were very weak, possessing only thirty pounds of gunpowder.⁶⁴ Although the siege ended in a truce with minor bloodshed, prospects had looked bleak for the Whigs.

By December of 1775, the Whigs had solidified their authority in the backcountry. In late November, Col. Richardson rounded up his Camden-based militia and set out to crush their loyalist foes. The ensuing “Snow Campaign” (named for the fluke snow storm that coated South Carolina that month) eradicated loyalist forces and took 136 of their leaders prisoners. Richardson had amassed an impressive force that was surely an intimidating sight. The 4,000 - 5,000 men under his command had a grave effect on loyalist efforts:

The number has a good effect, strikes terror, and shows what can be done on occasion. . . . we have been successful in disarming most of the unhappy people; they are coming in with fear and trembling, giving up their arms, with a sensible contrition for the errors they have been guilty of. The spirit of discord being much abated, most of the [loyalist] Captains have come in, and good part of the companies under them.⁶⁵

Drayton and the Whig militias had invoked aggressive tactics to suppress those who posed a threat to Whig authority. Such policies nearly worked against the Whigs, however. During one of his discourses to a group of Germans, the settlers “were so possessed with an idea, that the rangers were posted here to force their signatures to the

⁶³ Mr. Drayton to Council of Safety, September 17, 1775, in Gibbes, *Doc. Hist.*, 189.

⁶⁴ Mr. Williamson to Mr. Drayton, Giving an Account of the Siege, Action, and Treaty at Ninety-Six, Nov. 25, 1775, in *ibid.*, 218.

⁶⁵ Mr. Richardson to Mr. Laurens, Dec. 22, 1775, in *ibid.*, 243.

association, that they would not by any arguments be induced to come near us.”⁶⁶ Edward Musgrove, a prominent backcountry planter, chastised Drayton: “The great inadvertency of some of the backwoods committee, who should keep from letting out some foolish speeches to scare the people into their measures, which effects quite the other way – rather exasperates than frightens.”⁶⁷ Thomas Brown wrote that Drayton’s “acts of violence so incensed our People” that he and Cunningham assembled 1,200 men in five days and nearly drove Fletchall, who was reluctant to confront the Whigs, out of camp. Fear of alienating the population was visible in the opposition Drayton’s proposal to capture twelve key loyalist leaders met in the Council of Safety. The resolution passed by a 4-3 decision.⁶⁸ During the second session of the Provincial Congress, the Rev. William Tennent had served on a committee that drew up the Association he and Drayton were circulating. Henry Laurens, president of the Provincial Congress, believed that a clause labeling non-associators “inimical to the Liberty of the Colonies” was too harsh; he clashed with Tennent, who insisted on leaving it in.⁶⁹

Despite the concerns over alienating back-settlers through intimidation and harsh language, Drayton and the Whig leadership managed to walk a fine line between acts of terrorism and acts of necessity. In the aftermath of the Snow Campaign, the Whig government granted widespread pardons to those who had taken up arms in the name of the king. Richardson noted that:

The people are now more convinced than ever of their being wrong. The lenitive measures have had a good effect; the spirit and power is gone

⁶⁶ From Drayton and Tennent, Aug. 7, 1775, in *ibid.*, 128.

⁶⁷ Mr. Musgrove to Mr. Drayton, Oct. 14, 1775, in *ibid.*, 202.

⁶⁸ Krawczynski, *Drayton*, 185, 182.

⁶⁹ “Writings of the Reverend William Tennent, 1740-1777,” in *SCHM* 61, no. 3 (July 1960), 131.

from them and I am sure (if not interrupted by designing men on our side) that country, which I had it in my power to lay waste (and which the people expected), will be happy, and peace and tranquility take place of ruin and discord – a wished for event.⁷⁰

Those who had taken up arms against the Whigs quickly changed their minds. The majority of non-associators who surrendered during the Snow Campaign became “sensible of their error” and went home denouncing those leaders who had misled them about the “nature of the present contest.”⁷¹ Such action reinforces the idea that allegiances were seldom ideologically based, but more the result of which side offered the best protection.

The Whig government also worked to solidify its own authority by granting leniency to its former enemies. The Provincial Congress passed a resolution restoring the right to trade to those former non-associators, with the exception of arms and ammunition, which would only be returned by swearing an oath of loyalty. The Congress also resolved “That the respective Committees and supporters of the American cause, ought to discourage the use of any opprobrious language, reflecting upon the late misbehaviour of the aforesaid insurgents, who, behaving in a peaceable manner, ought to be treated with friendship and humanity, tenderness and moderation, as the Congress wishes to reclaim rather than to punish.”⁷²

The Whigs also made major political concessions. When formed the Provincial Congress was formed in June 1775, it dramatically increased the representation of the backcountry, though it still remained disproportional given its advantage in population. The backcountry was allocated only 3 of 30 seats in the colonial Assembly, but in the

⁷⁰Col. Richardson to Hon. H. Laurens, January 2, 1776, in Gibbes, *Doc. Hist.*, 248.

⁷¹Lambert, *South Carolina Loyalists*, 50.

⁷²Hemphill, *Extracts from the Provincial Congress*, 231-32.

new Provincial Congress, it garnered 55 of 187 seats.⁷³ Following the Declaration of Independence, the new Assembly formed under the South Carolina state constitution disestablished the Anglican Church, a major concession to the evangelical groups that dominated the backcountry.⁷⁴ Such concessions worked to preserve the peace won largely through intimidation.

* * * * *

The differing interests of yeoman farmers and the militant coastal leaders had caused the backcountry to react to Drayton and Tennent's tour with ambivalence. While some men felt so bitter towards the coastal elite that they took up arms in defense of royal government, the ambivalence most back-settlers displayed towards the impending revolution revealed that the vast majority of backcountry settlers wanted to be left to their private pursuits. However, the Whigs knew the danger of allowing loyalist militias to remain among the back-settlers. If the British invaded the colony, the Whigs faced a potential two-front war. Thus, the backcountry threat had to be neutralized. The Snow Campaign marked a watershed moment in the struggle for the backcountry. Loyalist militias were finally neutralized three months after the fall of royal government; the Whigs enjoyed uncontested rule by December 1775.

Despite their best efforts, loyalist militias failed to amass in numbers equal to the Whigs. As a result, men defected, unwilling to stand up against a numerically superior enemy. The events of 1775 brought a previously unknown degree of authority to the backcountry. Most men, because they were unwilling to risk their lives and property in opposing the Whigs, gravitated to the side that offered the most protection. In July 1775,

⁷³ Klein, *Unification of a Slave State*, 82.

⁷⁴ Gordon, *South Carolina and the American Revolution*, 54.

loyalist forces threatened Whig authority in the backcountry, but by December the Whig government conducted business without opposition. By exiling Gov. William Campbell to Charleston Harbor, the Whigs, through the Council of Safety and Provincial Congress, gained control of the militia structure. Those opposed to the conduct of the Whigs were purged from the militia and their access to the supplies needed to challenge the Whigs was restricted, thereby putting loyalists on the defensive. Historian Don Higginbotham concisely articulated the importance of the militia to suppressing loyalist opposition when he wrote, “The militia’s use of muscle guaranteed that the patriots would maintain control of the political and law enforcing machinery in every colony. Therefore, from a military point of view, [the] months [following Lexington and Concord] were quite likely the most crucial period of the Revolution.”⁷⁵

But the suppression of dissent in the backcountry was not solely a consequence of the fall of royal government and patriot seizure of the reins of authority. Whig success owed a great deal to the nature of opposition. Those who took up arms against the Whigs may have had an ideological attachment to the crown; but when confronted with a numerically superior force, they laid down their arms and promised to live in peace under Whig rule, bringing into question the strength of their ideology. Others never even took up arms. In light of Drayton’s threats of seizure of property, incarceration, and economic marginalization, many back-settlers - whose exact numbers we will never know - acquiesced to Whig rule. Becoming a loyalist meant taking up arms against another armed body, without the protection of British troops. Becoming a Whig required an

⁷⁵ Don Higginbotham, “The American Militia: A Traditional Institution with Revolutionary Responsibilities,” in *Reconsiderations on the Revolutionary War: Selected Essays* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978), 95.

individual to perform militia duty, but with the support of the established authority and the security of superior numbers. In light of Whig ascendancy to power and use of intimidation tactics, for the average back-settler looking to continue his pre-war life, the Whigs offered a greater chance to pursue the status quo. Robert Cunningham, in a critical letter to Drayton, best emphasized the value back-settlers placed on protection and why the Whigs emerged from 1775 with a firm grip on the backcountry: "I expected you would have acted with more honor than taken the advantage of men (as I believe) half scared out of their senses at the sight of liberty caps and sound of cannon, as seeing and hearing has generally more influence on some men than reason."⁷⁶

⁷⁶ Cunningham's reply to Drayton, Oct. 5, 1775, in Gibbes, *Doc. Hist.*, 200.

CHAPTER III

THE INDIAN THREAT

The Whigs overcame the economic, political, and social differences between the backcountry and lowcountry that had produced conflicting interests and successfully subdued the backcountry largely through intimidation. But they did not win control of the backcountry on this issue alone. Though war with Britain may not have advanced the plight or status of the back-settlers, the Whigs were able to represent the best interests of the settlers by addressing a chronic backcountry problem: Indians. The close proximity of Indian nations bred constant fear among those living beyond the Piedmont. The scars of the Cherokee war of 1759-1761 ran deep; settlers demanded protection. The need to neutralize the Indian threat became a pivotal issue in determining the allegiance of the backcountry.

On May 3, 1775, a letter arrived in Charleston from Arthur Lee, a patriot who had been dispatched to London as a representative from Boston. The letter stated that “there is gone down to sheerness, seventy-eight thousand guns and bayonets to be sent to America to be put into the hands of N***** [negroes], the Roman Catholics, the Indians, and the Canadians; and all the . . . means on earth used to subdue the colonies.”⁷⁷ The charge that the British planned to instigate a slave and Indian insurrection in the colonies

⁷⁷ Robert A. Olwell, “‘Domestik Enemies’: Slavery and Political Independence in South Carolina, May 1775-March 1776,” *Journal of Southern History* 55, no. 1 (Feb. 1989), 30.

was completely erroneous, but the letter provoked hysteria throughout South Carolina and provided the impetus for the formation of the Provincial Congress, which first met on June 1. Weeks later a rumor circulated throughout Charleston that Gov. William Campbell was aboard a sloop of war carrying 14,000 stands of arms to be used to arm the slaves and Indians.⁷⁸ Alexander Innes, Lord Dartmouth's secret agent in Charleston, reported that the letter "has raised a great ferment, and furnished the Committee with a pretext to mount a Guard of 100 men every evening, with a Patrol of Horsemen." The Lee letter also provided the Provincial Congress with justification to raise 2,000 troops and issue thousands of pounds of paper money. The letter also led to the exile of John Stuart, the British Indian Superintendent for the Southern Department.⁷⁹ Stuart's deputy, Alexander Cameron, remained behind.

The Whig propaganda machine fully exploited the letter. John Stuart and Alexander Cameron had no desire to unleash the Indians on the southern colonies. They crafted a "defensive Indian policy" attempted to secure the allegiance of the Indians without involving them in the conflict. After Stuart fled the colony, his Charleston mansion and his wife were held hostage by the Whig government. Stuart expressed concern that the Whigs would use the Indians to influence his behavior: "My wife is detained in Charles Town, and has been insulted and threatened; and I have been acquainted by the Committee that my estate is to answer for the behavior of the Indians."⁸⁰ Stuart demonstrated remarkable transparency in order to prove he had no

⁷⁸ Lord Governor William Campbell to Lord Dartmouth, August 31, 1775, in Davies, *Doc. of Amer. Rev.*, 11:94.

⁷⁹ "Charleston Loyalism in 1775," 128; Olson, "Thomas Brown and the South Carolina Backcountry," 44.

⁸⁰ John Stuart to David Taitt, Aug. 29, 1775, in Gibbes, *Doc. Hist.*, 159.

nefarious intentions. In a July 18 letter to the Committee of Intelligence, Stuart stated, “I have never received any orders from my superiors, which by the most tortured construction could be interpreted to spirit up or employ the Indians to fall upon the frontier inhabitants, or to take part in the disputes between Great Britain and her colonies.”⁸¹

Stuart’s subsequent talks with the Indians revealed his desire to keep them out of the conflict. In a meeting with the Cherokees he declared, “There is a difference between the people in England and the white people in America. This is a matter that does not concern you; they will decide it between themselves.”⁸² Stuart reiterated this point in a talk with the Creeks: “There is an unhappy dispute between the people of England and the white people of America, which, however, cannot affect you, as you can be supplied from Mobile, Pensacola, and this place, where the people live like brothers and enjoy peace; and it is not the intention of either party to hurt or molest you.”⁸³

Nevertheless, fears of an Indian attack persisted. The Whigs sent Major Andrew Williamson to meet with Alexander Cameron and interrogate him about a February letter written by Stuart that the Whigs interpreted as a plot to instigate the Indians. Williamson recorded notes of his conversation with Cameron in which the deputy Indian superintendent gave “the strongest assurances that he did not understand John Stuart’s letter to him in February to incite the Cherokee’s to attack the Province.” Cameron defended Stuart, asserting that he intended to keep the Indians “firmly attached to His Majesty’s government.” Cameron insisted that in the event of receiving such orders, he

⁸¹ John Stuart to Committee of Intelligence, July 18, 1775, in *Extracts of Letters Published by Order of Congress* (Charleston, printed by Peter Timothy, 1776).

⁸² John Stuart’s Talk to the Cherokees, Aug. 30, 1775, in Gibbes, *Doc. Hist.*, 160.

⁸³ Copy of John Stuart’s Talk to the Creek Indians, Aug. 1775, in *ibid.*, 162.

would ignore them in order to protect defenseless women and children. Cameron further added, “God forbid that he should be so void of humanity as to bring the Indians on this Province.”⁸⁴

The Indians had good reason to remain loyal to the crown. The British had made an effort to slow westward expansion. Both Stuart and Cameron were full members of Indian society; Stuart had even fathered a few children by Cherokee women. Cameron had so much faith in the Cherokees, he wrote, “The Cherokees are the most faithful Indians on the main. They would die, all hands, in my defense.”⁸⁵ Despite the strong attachment, Stuart struggled to control the Indians. Due to back-settlers’ encroachment on Indian hunting grounds, the Cherokees had unleashed a devastating war in 1759. Nonetheless, settlers continued to move west and often duped the Indians into selling their land. Stuart recognized the danger of these transactions: “You [the Cherokees] have been constantly told and admonished by me, not to treat or bargain for your land with any person but me.” The Cherokees had sold their land independently to Richard Pearis, a Whig Indian trader, who, Stuart warned, “cheats you of your land.”⁸⁶ These land sales threatened to spark conflict between the Indians and settlers and to allow the Whigs to point to the attacks as a British conspiracy.

After evicting Stuart from the colony, the Whigs worked to undermine British relations with the Indians by dispatching agents of their own. George Galphin, a prominent Indian trader, was commissioned by the Continental Congress as an Indian

⁸⁴ Andrew Williamson to Council of Safety, July 14, 1775, in “Journal of the Council of Safety for the Province of South Carolina,” *Collections of the South Carolina Historical Society* 2 (1858), 56.

⁸⁵ Alexander Cameron to Andrew McLean, Aug. 16, 1775, in Gibbes, *Doc. Hist.*, 144.

⁸⁶ Talk to Cherokees, in *ibid.*, 160.

superintendent and dispatched to the Creeks. The Whigs adopted a strategy of divide and conquer. The consequences of having all Indian tribes in the area unite against the colony were frightening. With Stuart and Cameron commanding the respect and admiration of the Cherokees and Creeks, their apprehension was reasonable. Stuart had stoked these fears when he settled a war between the Creeks and Choctaws in early 1776, freeing up Creek forces for a potential attack on the colonies.⁸⁷

With these fears in mind, Galphin worked to wean the Creeks away from the British through gifts of gunpowder. He reported, “If we could supply the Creeks with ammunition and goods it would not be in Mr. Stuart’s power to influence them to act against us.”⁸⁸ Galphin was ultimately successful; when the loyalists attempted to send wagons of powder to the Cherokees, the Creeks refused to allow the convoy to pass through their territory.⁸⁹

However, donations of powder to Indian nations, while it was in short supply in the colonies, nearly sparked a backlash from back-settlers. The Provincial Congress sent the Cherokees a gift of powder in November 1775, but en route a force led by Patrick Cunningham and Jacob Bowman, two loyalist leaders, intercepted the wagon train. Loyalists used the capture of the powder to their advantage, accusing the Whig government of fomenting an Indian attack against all those who opposed their rule. In response, Drayton composed a formal declaration explaining to the people of South

⁸⁷ Edward J. Cashin, *The King’s Ranger: Thomas Brown and the American Revolution on the Southern Frontier* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1989), 54-55.

⁸⁸ Letter from South Carolina Council of Safety to Georgia Council of Safety, July 1775, in “Journal of Council of Safety,” 61.

⁸⁹ Major Williamson to Mr. Drayton, June 27, 1776, in Gibbes, *Doc. Hist.*, 2:23.

Carolina the need to supply the Cherokees with powder. He defended the decision by arguing that:

Experience has taught us, that occasional presents to the Indians has been the great means of acquiring their friendship. . . . it clearly and unfortunately appeared, that a general Indian war was inevitable, unless the Indians were furnished with some small supplies of ammunition, to enable them to procure deer skins for their support and maintenance.⁹⁰

Drayton castigated some non-associators for making the issue of powder “an instrument for their most diabolical purposes.” In attempts to appease other non-associators, Drayton described the actions of the Whig government as “breathing equal benevolence to the associators and non-associators in this Colony” by keeping the Indians at peace and therefore providing universal protection. Though he acknowledged the scarcity of gunpowder, Drayton argued that by giving the Indians a gift and keeping them at peace, the colony would conserve gunpowder by avoiding a full-scale war.⁹¹

Drayton’s reasoning had good effect. Although the Whig plot to sell powder to the Indians had been exposed, settlers continued to remain distrustful of Alexander Cameron, despite his efforts to promote Indian neutrality. Major Andrew Williamson described the sentiment in the Ninety-Six district: “I was not a little surprised at my arrival here to find the most material transactions of the Congress in the mouths of every person, and to be told that there was an intention to seize Mr. Cameron, which occasioned his going to the [Cherokee] Nation.”⁹² News of Cameron’s presence among the Cherokees did not help his efforts to convince the back-settlers that the British meant no harm. Drayton wrote to Cameron asking him to follow Stuart’s precedent by leaving the

⁹⁰ Declaration by the Authority of Congress, November 19, 1775, in *ibid.*, 211-213.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² Andrew Williamson to Council of Safety, July 14, 1775, in “Council of Safety Journal,” 2:55.

province; Cameron could not disobey the request “with safety to your person and the people in your charge.”⁹³

Suspicion over Cameron’s activities grew when the Whigs received an affidavit detailing alleged plans for an Indian attack. A patriot named Jonathan Clark testified that John Garwick, a close friend of Cameron, had warned him to flee to safety if troubles escalated between the colonists and the king’s army. Garwick told Clark of a meeting Cameron had with four hundred Cherokee in which he described how the rebels had killed the king’s troops at Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill. The Cherokee replied they would fight but complained of a lack of powder; Cameron assured them he would supply them with the necessary tools of war.⁹⁴

Though Cameron and Stuart pursued a “defensive” Indian policy, other leading loyalists drew up plans designed to use Indians against the Whigs. Gov. Patrick Tonyn of East Florida, Thomas Brown, and Gen. Thomas Gage sought to crush the rebellion by enlisting the aid of Indians. On October 2, 1775, Gage wrote to John Stuart asking him “to make them [Indians] take Arms against His Majesty’s Enemies and to distress them all in their power, . . . no time should be lost to distress a set of People so wantonly rebellious.”⁹⁵ Stuart, however, disagreed. Before he received Gage’s orders, Stuart had written to the general stating “a great majority of the frontiers, and back inhabitants of Carolina are attached to and inclined to support government. In such circumstances, I conceive that an indiscriminate attack, by Indians, would be contrary to your Excellency’s idea, and might do much harm.” Though Stuart had no delusions of

⁹³ Mr. Drayton to Mr. Cameron, Sept. 26, 1775, in Gibbes, *Doc. Hist.*, 195.

⁹⁴ Affidavit of Jonathan Clark concerning Cameron and Cherokee Indians, Aug. 21, 1775, in *ibid.*, 148.

⁹⁵ Cashin, *King’s Ranger*, 41.

bringing the entire Indian population down upon the back-settlers, given the increasingly stiff opposition posed by the Whigs, he did acquiesce (rather ambiguously) to disposing “them to join in executing any concerted plan, and to act with, and assist, their well disposed neighbors.”⁹⁶

In the aftermath of the Snow Campaign, former loyalists were under intense Whig scrutiny. Thomas Brown believed that the only way loyalists would rise again was with the help of the Indians. Brown concocted a plan in which “trusted white men” would accompany the Indians during their attacks on small forts throughout the backcountry in order to distinguish between friend and foe. Brown hoped that by seizing these forts, loyalist and Indian forces would cut Whig supply lines to the backcountry.⁹⁷

At the end of February 1776, John Stuart left St. Augustine for Cape Fear, North Carolina to meet with Sir Henry Clinton to discuss a plan for using the Indians in the event of a British invasion. However, Stuart did not convey Brown’s militant plan to Clinton. A letter from Clinton to Governor Tonnyn revealed that Stuart only told Clinton of another of Brown’s proposal to raise four companies of riflemen, not his plan to have Indians fight alongside loyalists.⁹⁸

In the summer of 1776, the Whig government pre-empted any efforts by the British to enlist the Indians by sacking the Cherokees. Drayton gave specific orders to decimate the Cherokees:

And now a word to the wise. It is expected you make smooth work as you go – that is, you cut up every Indian corn-field, and burn every Indian town – and that every Indian taken shall be the slave and property of the taker; that the nation be extirpated, and the lands become the property of

⁹⁶ Another letter from Stuart to Gage, Oct. 3, 1775 in *Extracts of Letters*.

⁹⁷ Olson, “Loyalists and the American Revolution,” 49-50.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

the public. For my part, I shall never give my voice for a peace with the Cherokee Nation upon any other terms than their removal beyond the mountains.⁹⁹

The demoralizing attack on the Cherokees intimidated other nations into staying out of the conflict. Major Andrew Williamson received word from George Galphin that “the Creeks are fully determined not to assist the Cherokees in the present war.” Williamson expressed hope that the attack on the Cherokees “will deter any other nation, or tribes of Indians,” from “disturbing the quiet of Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, or this province for some time to come.”¹⁰⁰ By employing the resources of the government to eradicate the Indian threat, Drayton and his fellow Whigs helped to build public support for the revolutionary cause. The loyalist leadership had collapsed six months before the Whigs attacked the Cherokees. The Whigs already had a firm grasp on the backcountry because of their intimidation tactics, but neutralizing the Indians and opening up new lands for settlement asserted the pre-war interests of the back-settlers.

The British did more harm than good to their cause by drawing up plans to use Indians against the Whigs. During the summer of 1776, Cherokees killed loyalists without distinction, revealing the fallacy of Brown’s plan.¹⁰¹ John Stuart and Alexander Cameron may have had no intention of deploying the Indians against the Whig regime, but their intentions mattered not. Fear of Indian attack had existed since the Cherokee War of 1759 and was the number one issue on the minds of back-settlers. Cameron’s presence among the Cherokees was no doubt suspicious to those who had experienced the wrath of Indian attacks in the past. The Whigs were masterful propagandists; they

⁹⁹ Mr. Drayton to Francis Salvador, July 24, 1776, in Gibbes, *Doc. Hist.*, 2:29.

¹⁰⁰ Major Williamson to Mr. Drayton, August 22, 1776, in *ibid.*, 2:32.

¹⁰¹ Rev. Jas. Creswell to Mr. Drayton, July 27, 1776, in *ibid.*, 2:31

exploited Arthur Lee's letter to the fullest. The British provided no tangible evidence that they were defending the backcountry from Indian attack. Conversely, the Whigs raised a militia and took the war to the Indians, ensuring the protection of the back-settlers and winning their favor in the process. The sentiment of back-settlers, and the crucial role protection from Indian attack played in determining their allegiance was best described in the account of Alexander Chesney. Although Chesney, a loyalist, was arrested by the Whigs, imprisoned, forced to join the rebel army, and his house ransacked, and, he wrote, "We marched against the Indians, *to which I had no objection*, helped to destroy 32 of their towns. . . ." [my emphasis].¹⁰²

¹⁰² E. Alfred Jones, ed., "The Journal of Alexander Chesney, a South Carolina Loyalist in the Revolution and After," *The Ohio State University Bulletin* 26 no. 4 (Oct. 1921), 6-7.

CONCLUSION

In December 1775, Lord George Germain wrote to Major General Henry Clinton, assistant to General William Howe, with encouraging news regarding the rebellion in the southern colonies. Germain announced that “The number of well-affected persons there who, unprepared to resist, have been compelled to submit to the violence of the times is certainly very great, and therefore there is the fairest prospect of that province being reduced to obedience without any considerable difficulty or hazard...”¹⁰³ Little did Germain know that as his letter sailed across the Atlantic, the friends of government who had taken up arms against Whig oppression were in the process of being soundly defeated by Col. Richard Richardson and his army of 4,000-5,000 men in the Snow Campaign. Nevertheless, the British began to conceive of an assault on the southern colonies in hopes of using individuals loyal to the crown to crush the rebels.

In the early months of 1776, General Howe was preparing for a massive assault on New York City. The campaign to destroy the Continental Army in New York was the largest military engagement ever waged by the British military and required all available resources. Yet the British high command saw an opportunity to achieve victory on the cheap. Reports from the governors of Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia had communicated the expectation that the rebellion was the work of a minority and that

¹⁰³ Lord George Germain to Major General Henry Clinton, Dec. 6, 1775 in Davies, *Doc. of Amer. Rev.*, 11:205.

if aided by the British, loyalists would rise up and crush the Whig regimes. Over Howe's opposition, General Clinton, accompanied by Admiral Sir Peter Parker, was dispatched to rendezvous with loyalists in the southern colonies, quickly establish royal government, and return in time for the assault on New York. The plan was flawed in its conception and tragic in its execution. As historian Paul Smith wrote in his study of British loyalist policy:

The plan clearly envisioned only token opposition by rebel forces. No allowance was made for the possibility that the loyalists might be intimidated and rendered ineffective, no provision was made for any rebel resurgence once the British regulars had been withdrawn, and no warrants were issued for raising regular provincial regiments for later use by the colonial governors.¹⁰⁴

Clinton and Parker arrived at Cape Fear, North Carolina on March 12, 1776 only to learn that the friends of government that were so integral to their operation had been defeated at the Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge on February 27 after taking up arms prematurely. Their defeat had been the result of poor communication and choppy seas. Clinton's ships had been delayed by winter storms and a detachment of troops sailing from Ireland never arrived. Without a chance to conquer North Carolina, Clinton turned his attention to South Carolina. Clinton had received intelligence that the loyalists were confined to the backcountry, but without the reinforcements from Ireland, Clinton was too short-handed to make an assault that would reach the backcountry. With his ships anchored outside of Charleston, Clinton devised a light naval assault on the city. Rather than sack the capital, he sought to seize Sullivan's Island to create a temporary asylum for loyalists and royal officials "until the proper season for a southern American

¹⁰⁴ Paul H. Smith, *Loyalists and Redcoats: A Study in British Revolutionary Policy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1964), 22-23.

campaign returned.”¹⁰⁵ Though the attack was not designed to overthrow the Whig regime, Clinton believed that a future southern campaign was inevitable and thus saw value in establishing a friendly outpost. Without providing details on how the outpost would be supplied or defended, Clinton commenced his attack. Three ships ran aground as they attempted to fire on Fort Moultrie and Clinton’s ground forces were unable to reach Sullivan’s island due to impassible terrain and heavy fire. The subsequent British retreat provided the Whigs with a resounding boost of morale.¹⁰⁶

The British acted too late to save royal government in South Carolina. The Whig government’s use of intimidation and violence rooted out any staunch loyalist opposition and sidelined thousands of potential supporters of the crown. While the need for such oppressive tactics demonstrates backcountry antagonism to the independence movement, becoming an active loyalist required individuals to pick up a musket and fight their fellow colonists. Without the protection of the British, few were willing to jeopardize their lives and property in a losing cause. Thomas Brown wrote, “The Reduction of this Province. . . we can easily at any time effect when ever your Lordship shall be pleased to give Orders for the Purpose but until the arrival of some Troops either in the Province of North Carolina or this to cause a Diversion in our Favor we are of Opinion it would be an Experiment rather too hazardous.”¹⁰⁷ Protection was a prerequisite for action.

Part of the problem the opponents of independence faced was a lack of gunpowder. Governor Campbell acknowledged the futility of resistance when he noted,

¹⁰⁵ William B. Willcox, ed., *The American Rebellion: Sir Henry Clinton’s Narrative of His Campaigns, 1775-1782, with an Appendix of Original Documents* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), 27.

¹⁰⁶ For details on the attack, see William B. Willcox, *Portrait of a General: Sir Henry Clinton in the War of Independence* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962).

¹⁰⁷ “A Loyalist View of the Drayton-Tennent-Hart Mission,” 24.

“as they [back-settlers] have neither proper arms nor ammunition it would be the greatest cruelty as well as the highest madness to expose them to the fury of the rebels.”¹⁰⁸

Regardless of how much anger Drayton stirred up through his threats of burning houses and sacking property, opposition forces remained powerless against a Whig government in control of the colony’s militia and resources. In April 1775, men friendly to the Whig government raided numerous armories throughout Charleston and the lowcountry, seizing hundreds of weapons and thousands of pounds of powder. Lt. Gov. William Bull reported, “There is not now a pound of gunpowder in the public magazine.” Replacing the stolen powder was nearly impossible. Since the escalation of tensions between the colonists and the mother country, the king prohibited the exportation of gunpowder to the colonies.¹⁰⁹ But the Whigs managed to procure additional muskets and powder from French and Dutch smugglers. They also outfitted a number of privateer boats to raid British ships stationed in the harbor; by August 1775, they had stolen over twenty tons of powder.¹¹⁰

The lack of powder for the individual back-settler failed to stoke the fires of resistance. Moses Kirkland, a bitter enemy of Drayton and loyalist ring-leader, reported that “the backsettlers are two to one in number, more than the rebel party; they got some powder, but when it came to be divided, they had only two rounds a man.”¹¹¹ A numerical advantage in manpower was useless without enough powder. On November 25, 1775, the Provincial Congress ordered one Edward Weyman to collect any

¹⁰⁸ Lord Governor Campbell to Earl of Dartmouth, August 31, 1775, in Davies, *Doc. of Amer. Rev.*, 11:97.

¹⁰⁹ Lt. Gov. William Bull to Earl of Dartmouth, May 1, 1775, in *ibid.*, 10:111.

¹¹⁰ Lord Gov. Campbell to Earl of Dartmouth, Aug. 31, 1775, in *ibid.*, 11:97.

¹¹¹ Extract from Frederick-George Mulcaster’s letter to Governor (General) James Grant, September 29, 1775, in *Extracts of Letters*.

gunpowder still in private hands and to deposit it in the public magazine, thereby centralizing it and removing it from loyalist reach.¹¹² Following the Snow Campaign, the Whigs solidified their authority as the Provincial Congress resolved to disarm all those who “shall be active in opposing the measures of the Continental or Colony Congress.” Those who had fought against Col. Richard Richardson’s forces in the Snow Campaign were pardoned and were “allowed to trade as usual, except for arms and ammunition.” Only by convincing the committee of their loyalty to the American cause and through an oath could their arms be restored to them.¹¹³ Opposition to the Whig government led to disarmament. The consequences of disarmament were further amplified by the fact that the Indian threat did not subside until late 1776. Although no concrete evidence exists to prove that back-settlers signed the Association in order to keep their arms to defend themselves against the Cherokees and Creeks, the thought could not have been far from their minds.

Fear was the main reason unknown numbers of back-settlers signed the Association. But fear did not produce loyal subjects. Governor Campbell noted in a letter to Lord Dartmouth that “the boasted unanimity is notoriously false, very many who were *obliged* to sign the Association totally disapprove every measure they have taken, and if things come to the last extremity they will find themselves abandoned by numbers whom fear or interest reduced to join them.”¹¹⁴ One back-settler who reluctantly signed the Association attested, “I know many whose hearts revolted while they put their hands to it, and I have heard them declare that they submitted to this illegal power as they would to a

¹¹² Hemphill, *Extracts from the Provincial Congress*, 151.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 231.

¹¹⁴ Lord Governor Campbell to Earl of Dartmouth, July 19, 1775, in Davies, *Doc. of the Amer. Rev.*, 11:50.

highwayman who held a pistol to their breasts; some few, notwithstanding the terror held over their heads, when they signed it, added saving their allegiance to His Majesty.”¹¹⁵ Historian John Gordon argued in his military history of the Revolution in South Carolina that at the early stages of the war (1775-1776), both Whigs and loyalists displayed remarkable restraint on the battlefield. Despite all the threats and confrontations, only a handful of men died as a result of the tension between patriots and loyalists in 1775. However, when the British invaded in 1780, blood flowed in every town in the backcountry.¹¹⁶ Partisan warfare laid waste to the South Carolina backcountry as cowed associators and staunch non-associators (who had since been exiled from the colony) rose under the protection of British redcoats to seek both protection and revenge for their maltreatment. In the fog of war, as British troops failed to protect every neighborhood and as patriot militias roamed free, allegiances swayed with the wind. Young loyalists like Alexander Chesney joined the rebel army to “save my father’s family from threatened ruin.”¹¹⁷ The spirited Eliza Wilkinson, a young girl who witnessed the British occupation, wrote, “I fear *principle* governs few. *Interest* reigns predominant.”¹¹⁸ As historian Robert Lambert noted, many people in the backcountry tended to change loyalties three to four times during the war.¹¹⁹ Such vacillating proves that individuals were not loyal to a single ideology, but rather chose the side that offered the greatest

¹¹⁵ Narrative by George Millegen of his Experiences in South Carolina, in *ibid.*, 11:110.

¹¹⁶ John Gordon, *South Carolina and the American Revolution: A Battlefield History* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2003), 30.

¹¹⁷ “Journal of Alexander Chesney,” 6-7.

¹¹⁸ Eliza Wilkinson quoted in James Piecuch, “Three Peoples, One King: Loyalists, Indians, Slaves, and the American Revolution in the Deep South, 1775-1782” (Ph.D. diss., Dept. of History, College of William & Mary, 2005), 266.

¹¹⁹ Lambert, *South Carolina Loyalists*, 306.

degree of protection. But one other factor that has not yet been considered is self-interest. As Eliza Wilkinson said, "Interest reigns predominant."

The Whig government was not shy about using economic incentives to influence peoples' allegiance. In an effort to undermine the authority of militia colonel Thomas Fletchall, a man unfriendly to the patriots, the Council of Safety permitted open trade with Fletchall's men to try to lure them away from their commander.¹²⁰ If trade did not work to bring Fletchall's men over to the patriots, the Whigs were not beneath purchasing their loyalty. Col. Richard Richardson, a prominent backcountry militia commander recommended that "If our present expedition should fail that is now detached, we shall yet have these principals, as money will often accomplish what force cannot."¹²¹

While money served as motivation to join the rank and file, the promise of improved status through commissions attracted the local elite to the Whigs. In a letter to Henry Laurens, Thomas Fletchall affirmed the importance of officer commissions in determining the allegiance of men when he wrote, "As for my commissions, I care not who has them; a man that is to be bought by a commission is not worthy of one, although that is the price of many."¹²² Thomas Brown, the Georgian who had been beaten by a Whig mob, proclaimed, "A Profusion of Promises and Commissions were dealt out with a liberal hand together with some Bribes to procure a Subscription to the Association."¹²³ While the British also actively courted the local elite, the collapse of royal government hamstrung their efforts to match the incentives provided by the Whigs.

¹²⁰ Drayton to Council of Safety, September 17, 1775, in Gibbes, *Doc. Hist.*, 189

¹²¹ Richardson to Laurens, December 22, 1775, in *ibid.*, 243.

¹²² Fletchall to Laurens, July 24, 1775, in *ibid.*, 124.

¹²³ "Loyalist View of Drayton-Tennent-Hart Mission," 18.

When ideological fervor for independence did not draw individuals to the Whig camp, the prospect of improved social status did.

Enticing recruits with money and promises of greater clout within their communities does not always produce the most loyal soldiers, however. In August 1775, a mutiny occurred in the Whig militia. Drayton reported that “the men were in an uproar at the idea of a deduction of their pay, for they had in general been promised provisions above their pay, and they were determined to quit the camp this morning and disband.”¹²⁴ Drayton quelled the mutiny by allowing the enlisted men to purchase surplus goods from local residents and by ordering their commander to construct higher quality huts for their shelter.¹²⁵

Andrew Williamson accepted a commission as a major during 1775 and was well known within the backcountry for his efforts to neutralize the threat posed by loyalists and Indians. Yet, in 1780, after the fall of Charleston, Williamson took an oath of allegiance to the British in order to protect his property. He became known as the “Arnold” of Carolina.¹²⁶ Williamson was not alone. Moses Kirkland, one of the most vehement loyalists who plagued Drayton throughout 1775, had received a commission from the Council of Safety earlier that year. In July, the Council of Safety dispatched Kirkland and Major James Mayson to Fort Charlotte to secure a supply of gunpowder, but Kirkland switched sides during the mission and delivered the powder to a group of loyalists at Ninety-Six. The consensus among scholars is that Kirkland acted out of jealousy; he was angered that he had been passed over for a major’s commission in favor

¹²⁴ Drayton to Tennent, Aug. 7, 1775 in Gibbes, *Doc. Hist.*, 128-131.

¹²⁵ Krawczynski, *Drayton*, 165.

¹²⁶ “Journal of Alexander Chesney,” 40.

of Mayson.¹²⁷ Later in the war, Kirkland nearly walked away from the cause when his rival, Robert Cunningham, was awarded the commission he desired.¹²⁸ These blatant acts of self-interest demonstrated a lack of ideological attachment.

* * * * *

In hindsight, the inability of the British to provide protection against the measures of the Whig government in 1775 and 1776 destroyed any possibility of establishing royal government in the southern colonies. As Sir Henry Clinton noted:

The alarm which was now excited among loyalists by the large detachments sent off from the army called forth my utmost exertions to ease their minds, by convincing them that a total evacuation of the British posts was not intended. For I readily saw that the very worst consequences were to be apprehended from such an idea laying hold of them. . . . Should they, therefore, happen to be shaken in the confidence they had of support from her [Great Britain], policy might point out to many of them the prudence of early making the best peace they could with the usurpers. And, when that dangerous door was once opened, it was impossible to foretell where the defection might stop, or how soon the entire alienation of America might follow.¹²⁹

Clinton prophesized correctly. His 1776 attack on Sullivan's Island failed to provide any assistance or protection for the backcountry friends of government. After neutralizing the loyalist opposition in the backcountry, the Whig government solidified its authority and won favor with many back-inhabitants by attacking and decimating the Cherokees, thereby opening up more land for settlement. The Whigs also pardoned any insurgents who had taken up arms against them as long as they promised to live in peace. The disestablishment of the Anglican Church and greater representation in the state assembly aided the Whigs in their efforts to maintain the peace among the back-settlers. These

¹²⁷ Krawczynski, *Drayton*, 158.

¹²⁸ Lambert, *South Carolina Loyalists*, 153.

¹²⁹ Willcox, *Sir Henry Clinton's Narrative*, 109.

measures helped to dull the bitterness and animosity that had plagued the colony prior to independence. Men were permitted to return to their private pursuits.

The Whigs also took a hard-line approach to prevent future disturbances by exiling any remaining loyalists who refused to sign the Association with a guarantee of death if they ever returned. A sedition law promised to punish by death anyone who took “up arms with a hostile intent, and by force and violence, or by words, deeds or writing” tried to rally others, or communicated with or assisted the British in efforts to incite an Indian or slave rebellion.¹³⁰ After 1775, back-settlers, as Clinton said, made “peace with the usurpers.” This “peace” undermined British efforts to rally the backcountry in 1780 when the British failed yet again to provide back-settlers the protection they needed to declare their allegiance to the crown.

The struggle to control the backcountry in 1775 and the bloodbath that broke out in 1780 in South Carolina are all the more striking when compared to the experiences of back-settlers in Virginia. In terms of ethnic, religious, and economic factors, the Virginia backcountry had more in common with the South Carolina backcountry than in contrast. A plethora of ethnic groups settled in pockets throughout the Virginia Southside and Shenandoah Valley. Evangelicals threatened the established Anglican order. Neither backcountry cultivated staple crops and thus had similar social orders. Yet domestic strife and civil war did not plague Virginia. The reason for Virginia’s remarkable stability is political. From the beginning of settlement, the tidewater elite took steps to integrate the backcountry into the existing political structure. Backcountry counties like Lunenburg sent representatives to the House of Burgesses and enjoyed the benefits of having local

¹³⁰ Lambert, *South Carolina Loyalists*, 50.

institutions of government such as the county court.¹³¹ In South Carolina, the back-inhabitants were left without essential government institutions and a political voice to rectify the problem. Following the Regulator movement, greater steps were taken to correct the neglect, but the backcountry remained a distinct society with interests that did not include revolution.

* * * * *

The South Carolina backcountry, like its neighboring backcountries in other colonies, did not possess a deferential social order. Even if it had, would it have had any influence on the events of 1775 and 1776? In a polarized society, drifting towards civil war, men act in their own self-interest. If scholars question the strength of deference in peacetime, they should reject outright the notion that men willingly deferred to their social superiors in wartime. Robert Cunningham, Moses Kirkland, Thomas Brown, and countless other prominent men in the South Carolina backcountry were respected by their neighbors. But when faced with loss of property, economic restrictions, incarceration, or even death - all threats to a man's independence - most back-settlers opted for the course of least resistance. This course involved signing an Association. When threatened by militia and hostile Indians, the decision to acquiesce to Whig rule was simple and had little to do with deference. The case of John Champneys illustrates this point. Champneys had his property seized by the Whigs when he refused to muster for his local militia. He was taken into custody and jailed by the Whigs. As he slept one night, someone fired a

¹³¹ Richard Beeman, who published a case study of Lunenburg County, Virginia, wrote an excellent piece comparing the experiences of the Virginia and South Carolina backcountries entitled "The Political Response to Social Conflict in the Southern Backcountry: A Comparative View of Virginia and the Carolinas during the Revolution," in Hoffman, *An Uncivil War*, 213-239.

gunshot into his cell, narrowly missing him. Reflecting back on his experiences during the war, Champneys epitomized the sentiments of thousands of back-settlers and helped explain why the Whig government won control of the backcountry: “*As protection and allegiance are inseparable*, we are desirous to enjoy the protection of our country, and are satisfied to take the test of allegiance” [my emphasis].¹³²

¹³² John Champneys, *An account of the sufferings and persecutions of John Champneys, a native of Charles-town, South Carolina; inflicted by order of Congress, for his refusal to take up arms in defense of the arbitrary proceedings carried on by the rulers of said place. Together with his protest, &c.*, (London, 1778).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Champneys, John. *An account of the sufferings and persecutions of John Champneys, a native of Charles-town, South Carolina; inflicted by order of Congress, for his refusal to take up arms in defense of the arbitrary proceedings carried on by the rulers of said place. Together with his protest, &c.* London 1778.

“Charles Town Loyalism in 1775: The Secret Reports of Alexander Innes.” Edited by B.D. Bargar. *South Carolina Historical Magazine* 63, no. 3 (July 1962), 125-136.

Davies, K.G. ed. *Documents of the American Revolution, 1770-1783 (Colonial Office Series)*. Vols 9-11. Dublin: Irish University Press, 1975.

Extracts of Letters Published by Order of Congress. Charleston. Printed by Peter Timothy, 1776.

Gibbes, R.W. ed. *Documentary History of the American Revolution: Consisting of Letters and Papers Relating to the Contest for Liberty, Chiefly in South Carolina, in the Possession of the Editor, and Other Sources*, Vols. 1-2, New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1855.

Hemphill, William Edwin. ed., *Extracts from the Journals of the Provincial Congress of South Carolina, 1775-1776*. Columbia: South Carolina Archives Department, 1960.

Hooker, Richard J., ed. *The Carolina Backcountry on the Eve of the Revolution: The Journal and Other Writings of Charles Woodmason, Anglican Itinerant*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1953.

“The Journal of Alexander Chesney, a South Carolina Loyalist in the Revolution and After.” Edited by E. Alfred Jones. In *The Ohio State University Bulletin* 26 no. 4. (Oct. 1921).

“Journal of the Council of Safety for the Province of South Carolina.” In *Collections of the South Carolina Historical Society*, Vol 2. Charleston: South Carolina Historical Society, 1858.

“A Loyalist View of the Drayton-Tennent-Hart Mission to the Backcountry.” Edited by James H. O'Donnell. *South Carolina Historical Magazine* 67, no. 1 (January 1966), 15-28.

“Oliver Hart’s Diary of the Journey to the Backcountry,” in *Journal of the South Carolina Baptist Historical Society*, vol. 1, (November 1775), 18-30.

Willcox, William B. ed., *The American Rebellion: Sir Henry Clinton’s Narrative of His Campaigns, 1775-1782, with an Appendix of Original Documents*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954.

“Writings of the Reverend William Tennent, 1740-1777.” Edited by Newton B. Jones. In *South Carolina Historical Magazine* 61, no. 3 (July 1960), 129-145.

Secondary Sources

Beeman, Richard. *The Evolution of the Southern Backcountry: A Case Study of Lunenburg County, Virginia, 1746-1832*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984.

Beeman, Richard R. “The Political Response to Social Conflict in the Southern Backcountry: A Comparative View of Virginia and the Carolinas during the Revolution.” In Ronald Hoffman, Thad W. Tate, and Peter J. Albert, eds. *An Uncivil War: The Southern Backcountry during the American Revolution*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1985.

Bridenbaugh, Carl. *Myths and Realities: Societies of the Colonial South*. Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1952.

Brown, Richard Maxwell. *South Carolina Regulators*. Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1963.

Cashin, Edward J.. *The King’s Ranger: Thomas Brown and the American Revolution on the Southern Frontier*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1989.

Ferguson, Clyde R. “Carolina and Georgia Patriot and Loyalist Militia in Action, 1778-1783.” In Jeffrey J. Crow and Larry E. Tise, eds. *The Southern Experience in the American Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978.

Gordon, John. *South Carolina and the American Revolution: A Battlefield History*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2003.

Greene, Jack P. “Independence, Improvement, and Authority: Towards a Framework for Understanding the Histories of the Southern Backcountry during the Era of the American Revolution.” In Ronald Hoffman, Thad W. Tate, and Peter J. Albert,

- eds., *An Uncivil War: The Southern Backcountry during the American Revolution*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1985), 3-36.
- Higginbotham, Don. "The American Militia: A Traditional Institution with Revolutionary Responsibilities." In *Reconsiderations on the Revolutionary War: Selected Essays*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978.
- Hoffman, Ronald. "The 'Disaffected' in the Revolutionary South." In Alfred F. Young, ed. *The American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism*. Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1976.
- Johnson, George Lloyd. *The Frontier in the Colonial South: South Carolina Backcountry, 1736-1800*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1997.
- Klein, Rachel. *Unification of a Slave State :The Rise of the Planter Class in the South Carolina Backcountry, 1760-1808*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1990.
- Krawczynski, Keith. *William Henry Drayton: South Carolina Revolutionary Patriot*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001.
- Lambert, Robert. *South Carolina Loyalists in the American Revolution*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1987.
- Lee, Wayne E. *Crowds and Soldiers in Revolutionary North Carolina: The Culture of Violence in Riot and War*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001.
- Nadelhaft, Jerome. *The Disorders of War: The Revolution in South Carolina*. Orono, ME: University of Maine at Orono Press, 1981.
- Olson, Gary. "Loyalists and the American Revolution: Thomas Brown and the South Carolina Backcountry, 1775-1776." In *South Carolina Historical Magazine* 69, no. 1 (January 1968), 44-56.
- Olwell, Robert A. "Domestik Enemies": Slavery and Political Independence in South Carolina, May 1775-March 1776." In *Journal of Southern History* 55, no. 1 (Feb., 1989), 21-48.
- Piecuch, James. "Three Peoples, One King: Loyalists, Indians, Slaves, and the American Revolution in the Deep South, 1775-1782." Ph.D. diss., Dept. of History, College of William & Mary, 2005.
- Smith, Paul H. *Loyalists and Redcoats: A Study in British Revolutionary Policy*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1964.

William B. Willcox, *Portrait of a General: Sir Henry Clinton in the War of Independence*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962.

VITA

Pierson J. Bell

Pierson J. Bell was born on March 19, 1984 and grew up in Akron, NY (near Buffalo). He completed his undergraduate work at Canisius College where he earned a B.A. in history and social studies adolescence education. He enrolled at The College of William & Mary in the Fall 2006 in pursuit of a Master's degree in American history. He will receive his degree in August 2007 and will be returning home to teach at The Park School of Buffalo.

While at William & Mary he served as the archival apprentice in the Special Collections Research Center at Swem Library. He was also active in Revolutionary War re-enacting as a member of the William & Mary College Company. He currently belongs to a company of British Grenadiers attached to the 64th Regiment of Foot.